# Image of the Week: Building a Classroom Community through Visual Literacy

A nonfiction routine and ritual that students will love is called "Image of the Week." Choose one day of the week (e.g. Wednesday) and post an image of interest on a bulletin board in the classroom. The image might be a photograph, diagram, drawing, or map -- it varies each week. Student interests, topics of study, current events, or unique images can be just a few of the reasons images are chosen for "Image of the Week." You as a teacher can select the images to post. Give the students the opportunity to submit images for the activity as well.

## Setting up the routine:

During their morning arrival, transition times, and throughout the week, children post observations and questions about the image. The comments and questions that they have can either be written on sticky notes or pieces of paper that are attached to the bulletin board along with the image.

Set up expectations for the postings:

For example:

* If you post a question, write with the green marker. Green is like a growing plant just like questions can grow ideas.
* If you are posting an opinion, for example, "This photo is cool," you need to attach evidence with a complete statement like "This close-up photo of a sunflower is cool because it shows the spiral pattern made by the seeds."
* Include your name with your post.

## Introducing Image of the Week

Taking time to react and respond to visual images may be a new experience for many students, so supportive experiences should be built into this routine. When you start the project, spend at least a week modeling how to interact with an interesting image. Ask students to observe what you’re doing and saying and why certain strategies were helpful.

After a week or two, depending on the group and when the class seems ready, students practice this routine; they work in pairs and talk with their partners about their ideas, observations and questions about images. On the first day, have them comment on the image together. Gather the posted comments and add them to the image. During the next Image session, student teams review the image and read the compiled comments. Students can add additional observations to the collected ideas. Children learn a great deal when they can read and reflect on what their peers have posted about the image.

The "Image of the Week" display should include charts that support children's thinking as they observe the latest image and react to the weekly image. There are three main charts (attached): an observation chart, a question/wonder chart, and an opinion chart. Make each chart is a growing list of thoughtful comment and question stems to support students as they post comments. Have the students give suggestions of stems that could be added to the lists. The charts are dynamic and reflect students' growth over the year as they sharpen their visual literacy skills.

Here are examples of the charts:

Observations:

* *I see . . .*
* *I noticed . . .*
* *I observed . . .*
* *I think . . .*
* *If you took this apart . . .*

Wonders and Questions:

* *How did the photographer . . .?*
* *Why is . . .?*
* *I wonder . . .*
* *What is happening . . .?*
* *Where is . . .*
* *Who would . . .*
* *When? Season? Location? Habitat? Time period?*

Opinions:

* *I love . . .*
* *I like . . .*
* *I do not like . . .*
* *I hate . . .*
* *I am excited about . . .*
* *I am disgusted . . .*
* *I bet . . .*

Once students feel comfortable with the process, they are guided to react and post comments on the "Image of the Week" board during arrival time, transition time and other times during the day/week. Encourage all students to participate by creating at least one post. Share interesting posts with the class to draw attention to the Image Board so that it remains a dynamic part of our classroom.

Once students have a week to react and respond to the images, talk about the posts, sort the posts into observation, question, and opinion categories, and ask the person who selected the image to explain why he/she selected this particular image. When we finish our discussions, have the students write a final reaction to the image with a "quick write" paragraph response. Encourage the students to write descriptively by using their senses. These weekly wrap-up reactions can be used as formative assessments to track how students are applying editing skills, conventions, organizational skills, and word choice strategies. Once the writing is done, unveil a new picture and begin the process all over again at the start of a new week.

**Image**

**of the**

**Week**

# http://images4.fanpop.com/image/photos/23300000/blue-eye-eyes-23302714-1224-900.jpgObservations:

* *I see . . .*
* *I noticed . . .*
* *I observed . . .*
* *I think . . .*
* *If you took this apart . . .*

# http://upload.wikimedia.org/wikipedia/commons/9/9d/Question_mark_blue.pngWonders and Questions:

* *How did the photographer . . .?*
* *Why is . . .?*
* *I wonder . . .*
* *What is happening . . .?*
* *Where is . . .*
* *Who would . . .*
* *When? Season? Location? Habitat? Time period?*

# http://3.bp.blogspot.com/-iNnbuJuy0og/UM8ZpJd4xNI/AAAAAAAACn4/oSWP2Zgq38o/s1600/thinking.JPGOpinions:

* *I love . . .*
* *I like . . .*
* *I do not like . . .*
* *I am excited about . . .*
* *I bet . . .*
* *This reminds me of . . .*
* *This image makes me feel . . .*

